8/30/72

Dear Harold,

The revision of my book is completed, except for some retyping (my mother's dept.) and I am now free. I've just sat down to answer the mail from you that I've been so negligent about, and I find I have 11 fat envelops dating to the end of July! Two of those were delayed because they were originally delivered to the wrong house by mistake. One was remailed and has a phila postmark on top of the Frederick mark. The other, mailed 8/23, was dropped in my door tonight, by who I don't know. Needless to say, it would be just about impossible to answer everything. I've read everything, as I do as soon as I receive it. But now I'll comment only where I think it is necessary.

I'm really sorry that I've been so non-responsive for so long. The main reason is that I've been busy with my book, plus other things to which I've had to devote time. But also, I've been in a rather bad state of mind this summer. For a number of reasons, this has been just a lousy summer for me, and I can't wait to get back to school. My social life at home really deteriorated, and as a result I've been pretty lonely, which is not healthy for me. I began to find that work was becomming more and more of a burdon, and nothing seemed to satisfy me. I go through stages. Sometimes I've been content, other times miserable. I attribute it to being alone so much. I anticipate that return to school is just what I need.

It is also true, I think, that the flap with Cyril has contributed to my mental state. I regard the thing as a beneficial experience for me, but that does not mean that it did not take its toll emotionally. I don't think I've ever been in a position where I had to make such a decision where I've felt as if I was under so much pressure. I haven't a single regret, except for a few things which transpired long before the summer.

I'll go through your letters in chrino order, filing as I go along and making comment where necessary.

TAPES: I hope I haven't cause you any inconcenience by not responding to your offer. The tapes you describe sound interesting, but I don't know if I'll have time to listen to them in the near future. Also, I don't think it's worth the expenses of mailing and replacing tape, or buying new tape to dub, not now, at least, with all the expenses of returning to school. So, you can use these tapes for yourself. Thanks for the offer, and, again, sorry about the delayed response.

You wrote me a six-page letter after you received my letter to Wecht, in which you said that there could be something productive in his exam if he did the right things, and you made numerous suggestions. If you recall, I told Wecht in my letter that after Sylvia first called, I prepared a long list of things to do, questions to answer, etc. Well, I'll be damned if everything you suggested in your letter isn't in my list! When I first read your letter, I was a little pissed off that I had decided not to send Wecht my list in the first place. At any rate, after I read your letter several times, I decided to heed your advice, but instead of writing another long letter to Wecht, which would take alot of time for me, I decided to call him first, to ask just what he had planned to do, probe him, and discuss your/my ideas, to see if it was even worth writing another letter. I called, he was out of town, and I left a message with his secretary. I taped my brief conversation with the sec. and left my phone hooked up to tape for a week. He never called me back.

Although it is a little late for comment, your analysis of the amount of time Cyril could possibly spend with each item is essentially correct. However, your interpretation of why Wecht wanted 2 days is not the same as mine. His letter to me does not preclude that he intended to spend more than one

day on the contract items alone, with perhaps a couple hours on the "other items." Still, the point is well taken, for whether he could devote 2 or 4 minutes per item, it is still not enough time. I raised this point with Dick when he called me from Trenton, and at first he argued that Wecht, as an expert, might be able to sort out only those pix which are really important and spend the time on those. I convinced Dick that this was a silly thought. Dick, by the way, seemed very disappointed in Wecht, and said that it seemed that Wecht was "trying to impress people." I know he spoke to you before he called me, but I don't know what opinions he expressed to you.

I note now, if prematurely, that it appears my analysis of what Wecht indended by "other items" was essentially correct, which does not mean yours was incorrect. He did see the films and the bullets, and indeed that is all he has talked about except for that monstrsity with Graham. But nothing he has said about 2 gunmen is based on the pix and X-rays, nor is it new.

I'm returning the review of the Watson book, as you requested. I read it several times, but I didn't see what you were getting at in having me read it.

Re Wecht's inviting Jerry to his expert disgestion session, it is my understanding that Jerry planned to be in Europe at this time, and I know Jerry did go to Europe, so I assume he wasn't there. Wecht apparently sent the same form letter to a great many people.

Khrushchev, Coorespondence file: You wrote me indicating the contents of this file are missing. I remeber seeing this heading in the TIGER drawer, but I never pulled the file out to look at it. The next time I'm in touch with JP I'll ask him if he has it. He's never mentioned it to me, which does not mean he wouldn't have it. I don't know what kind of rummaging he's done through your files, but it seems unlikely to me, considering his mind, that he would take this.

I once pulled out the Missile Crisis chrono files fromthe TIGER file, but all that was in each folder were your hand-written notes, which were totally illegible to me, so I put the files back where they came from. That is all I've had to do with those files.

Potomic article: I've thought a lot about the article on you which is to appear in Potomic. Something seems rotten to me. I can't understand why there shoudd suddenly be such an interest in you and the topic to justify a major article, as yuo describe it. No doubt, the story of the threat, which apparently and unintentionally prompted this, is quite interesting and would make a great story. No doubt too, your life would make a great feature story. But let's face it; you're not exactly the darling of the Wash Post. I really fear they might be out to get you. I am not clear on one thing--do you get to read the whole story before it is run, and if so do you get the final word?

At any rate, congradulations on this; I sincerely hope it goes well and you get some of the recognition which you richly deserve. When it appears, if you can, please send me a copy.

Gary's Letter: Mary has sent me everything you sent her, and I was more shocked than I expected, it is so transparent and undeniable. Gary had sent me a carbon of his letter to you, with a note to me which read as follows:

> Enclosed is a letter I never thought I'd be able to write--I never thought I'd have to.
>
> Despite what I say in this letter, Harold is a fine guy. I hope your friendship with him can continue without such an event.

By the way, the envelop in which Gary sent this to me bears the same date postmark as the one he used to mail to you, but he mailed mine in a letter size envelop, yours in a legal size. I note also that the type of machine on which the page of the inventory is copied is common, and can be found in almost any library (in Phila, at least). I presume you want the original he sent you returned, so I will send it to you as soon as I copy it, probably tommrrow. The page has been folded so much that it is really wearing down.

Gary's letter to the A removes any pretense of innocence, as his letters tried to convey. First of all, the Archives listing leaves no doubt of what the document is. But his letter says that if this d.c. is not the one it has to be, then please send the right one. Certainly, this destroys his claim that he didn't know this was in the Archives. It's so blatant I can hardly believe it.

I cannot honestly say that you were excessive in your response to Gary. It was all warranted, I am sorry to say.

Kelley Letter: I think I see what you are getting at. Lattimer's revelation meant that Kelley was not honest with you about the autopsy films. So, you want the documents referred to in L's article, and any others withheld relating to chain of possession and spoiling. But you want them from the SS, not the Archives. The one thing I can't quite figure to my satisfaction is your timing. You have hinted this is important. Explanations?

You sent me an extra carbon of your first letter to Morgan, which includes your "I told you so," which is deserved. You indicate that it is up to me who else should get this. I think it would be a waste with Gary and (esp.) Jerry. I've sent it to Dick and asked that he forward it to Sylvia.

Re your letter to Paul about the HADES-CAMELOT documents, I remember seeing them at your place only as the reduced Xerox which Paul apparently had sent you. I don't have copies of them myself, so I can't help. The copies I saw there were first included with a large batch of documents from Paul, and then separated and attached to the draft chapter for Lil to refer to in typing. That's the last I remember.

If it's not any trouble to send, I'd like to see your extra copy of the recent Sprague piece, which you offered me. I like to have some idea of what the nuts are up to.

You wrote a brief note to me, asking if I have copies of of Hoover's 9/23/64 to Rankin. I don't.

I'm sorry you got the impression that I was definitely planning on coming down before school started. I would have liked to, but I didn't really have the time, and now it is impossible because school starts in less than a week. This means, in all probability that I will not be down again until winter recess, late December. Once school starts, it is almost impossible to get away for a few days. This is not the way I'd like it, for I'd love to come down soon, but it is the way things are.

By now you have my letter to Syvlia re Wecht in NYT. You might wonder why I chose to address her. I respect her very much, without losing sight of her shortcomings. It has been a source of much bewilderment to me that she can have maintained the position she did with respect to Wecht, especially as I read over our confidential correspondence about this. And, of course, the memory of my phone conversations with her still lingers.

I do hope that she is not in such bad shape that the reality of this will do her real mental harm. But I felt I had to address her, because she did maintain her position so forcefully, and because she was so wrong. I think this is something she has to see.

The NYT piece was worse than I would have expected, on everyone's part, esp. Cyril's. I know the copy I sent you must have been hard to read, but now I have an extra original, which is enclosed for you. I don't have to tell you what is obvious to you. There is no excusing Cyril's taking credit for everyone else's work on SBT, and his other plagarism, but the worst thing, in my mind, was telling Graham the autopsy films "strongly support" WC findings that shots which hit JFK came from rear. That was the height of irresponsibility and dishonesty, and it is ever so much worse coming from him. What Cyril has said, really, is that based on all the old evidence, the SBT is invalid, but the autopsy films themselves back the WR.

Boy, were you right. In the past two months, the correctness of your position (which became mine) became more and more obvious to me, as you spelled it out and as I thought about it. Now, although I am quite disturbed over all this, I have some measure of inner peace and comfort that I took the position I did, that even when I was not in complete agreement with you, I argued with Sylvia and Jerry against their unthinking complacency.

This has taken 3 hours, it's late, and I'm very tired. I hope I haven't missed anything. On the matter of the broken drape cord, I'll find the letter in which you described the problem, and my father said he can probably send you a diagram on how to re-string the rod, if it is a normal traverse rod.

Please give Lil my best, and, again, I'm sorry that I've been so negligent about writing lately.

Best wishes,

Howard

P.S. - I was able to get you American Grotesque. Will send soon. It seems pretty "grotesque" itself.